(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the people exporting the non-bio products to other countries in the name of bio-products have been identified;

(d) if so, the action taken against them; and

(e) the steps being taken by Government to increase bio-production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No. Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

(e) To promote organic farming in the country, Government has approved a Central Sector Plan Scheme, National Project on Organic Farming with an outlay of Rs. 57.05 crores from October, 2004 for production, promotion, certification and market development of organic farming during 10th Plan period with the following main components:-

(i) Putting in place a system of certification of organic produce.

(ii) Capacity building through service providers.

(iii) Financial support for commercial production units for production of organic inputs like fruits and vegetable waste compost, bio-fertilizer production and hatcheries for vermiculture.

(iv) Training, field demonstration, promotion and market development.

Besides, under National Programme on Organic Production (NPOP), Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Agency (APEDA) is facilitating certification of the Organic Produce for export purpose.

Import of Natural Rubber

1650. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether import of natural rubber has increased during the current year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken to check imports of natural rubber?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes, Sir. The import of Natural Rubber during the current year is 69358 MT as on 28th February 2007. Total import of Natural Rubber during 2005-06 was 45285 MT.

(b) Natural Rubber prices in the international market have been ruling below the rubber prices in Indian market during October 2006-January 2007.

(c) India has decided to keep all the major trade forms of NR in the negative list of various free trade agreements. Since natural rubber is included in the list of sensitive items of import, its import is closely monitored by the Government. There is 20% customs duty on Natural Rubber and 70% on Centrifuged Rubber. Import of natural rubber is also subject to quality certification by the Rubber Board.

Free trade agreement

†1651. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the countries with whom India has free trade agreements;

(b) whether Government have ever assessed their grains and losses; and

(c) if so, the country-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) India has entered into Free Trade Agreements with the following countries/regions:-

(i) The India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement covering only goods was signed on 28th December, 1998 and its implementation began in March, 2000.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.